



Downtown Columbia

DOWNTOWN COLUMBIA PARTNERSHIP (DCP) BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Minutes of the January 13, 2015, Board Meeting

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD IN ATTENDANCE

Gabe Chung, The Howard Hughes Corporation
Greg Fitchitt, The Howard Hughes Corporation
Milton Matthews, Columbia Association
Robert Jenkins, The Howard Hughes Corporation
Mark Thompson, Howard County Government
Ashley Venable, General Growth Properties
Barb Nicklas, Executive Director

MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN ATTENDANCE

Tom Glaser, Howard Community College
Carolyn Karl, Howard County General Hospital
Leonardo McClarty, Chamber of Commerce
Larry Twele, Economic Development Authority
Linda Wengel, Town Center Village Board

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Jeff Agnor, Attorney for DCP
Patricia Laidig, Town Center Village Manager
Jean Moon, Jean Moon & Associates
Theresa de Rubertis – The Howard Hughes Corporation (taking minutes)

Meeting called to order at 1:00 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Greg Fitchitt asked that because Mr. Chung would have to leave early, the agenda items be reordered so that voting items could be covered within the one-half hour that the meeting would have a quorum. After a motion by Ms. Venable to approve the agenda, as reordered, which was seconded Mr. Chung, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes

After a motion by Mr. Thompson to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Matthews, the motion passed unanimously.

2013 Audit

Ms. Nicklas distributed a revised 2013 Audit and reviewed the changes that were requested by the members at the last meeting. After approval by the Board, the audit will be submitted to the County Council along with the 2013 Annual Report.

After a motion by Mr. Chung to approve the audit, which was seconded Mr. Thompson, the audit was approved.

2013 Annual Report

Ms. Nicklas distributed the Year 2013 Annual Report and described how it was compiled. It is essentially a letter describing what the Downtown Columbia Partnership (DCP) achieved in its first year of existence. Future annual reports will look more official and be packaged.

After a motion by Ms. Venable to approve the report, which was seconded Mr. Chung, the 2013 Annual Report was approved. It will be submitted to the County Council along with the 2013 Audit.

Funding Strategy

Ms. Nicklas distributed a proposal from Civitas Consultants (David Feehan) for developing funding strategies for the DCP. Ms. Nicklas solicited referrals using the message board on the International Downtown Association (IDA) website and received a number of names, which she followed up on, eventually requesting a proposal from Civitas. The fee for the initial scope is just under \$20,000, which is below the budgeted amount of \$35,000. Civitas is to research potential sources of funding to employ, including possibly a Business Improvement District (BID). When the DCP is fully funded by the sources provided in the legislation at full build-out of the Plan, the funds will be significant. That will not be for a long time and in order to fulfill its mission, the DCP must have other sources of funds.

After a motion by Mr. Matthews to approve the audit, which was seconded by Mr. Chung, the board approved moving forward with the Civitas proposal.

Sponsorship – Sweetlife Festival

Ms. Nicklas distributed a hand-out and Mr. Fitchitt showed slides from the sponsorship brochure of the Sweetlife Festival, which is to be put on by Sweetgreen at MPP at the end of May. The Howard Hughes Corporation (THHC) and Kettler have already decided to sponsor Sweetlife Festival for \$50,000 in order to promote Downtown Columbia and the Metropolitan, and proposed that the DCP participate in that sponsorship (at a 1/3 share of \$17,000). The festival is expected to attract upwards of 30,000 people, mostly in the 18-34 age range. THHC and Kettler plan to have a replica of the Metropolitan arcade lounge, and potentially videos promoting Downtown Columbia. There was quite a bit of discussion among board and advisory council members, and the consensus appeared to be that the 25-34 age group (millennials) is a target demographic and that the Sweetgreen brand seems well aligned with Downtown Columbia's image. Given

that Mr. Chung had to leave before the discussion was completed, leaving the board without a quorum, the matter was tabled until the next meeting.

Snow Removal – Town Center

Ms. Venable brought up a concern that snow removal on Little Patuxent Parkway was inconsistent and was insufficient when entering downtown from the east. Mr. Jenkins explained that the state maintenance ends and county maintenance begins west of Route 29. Ms. Venable mentioned that the mall attracts 22 million people each year and something should be done to make sure travel into downtown is safe. Mr. Jenkins said that some thought should be given to the possibility of the DCP taking over the plowing provided the county provides sufficient resources. Another suggestion was that Councilwoman Sigaty be asked to advocate on behalf of the DCP, although there was no designation of anyone to make that contact.

Executive Director 's Report

- **Website** - Ms. Nicklas explained that the DCP website has been attacked by Russian malware and that IT technicians are investigating, evaluating and addressing the situation and will be asked for a report and recommendations.
- **Facebook** - The DCP's Facebook page has been successful, especially by boosting individual posts, which apparently greatly benefited Petit Louis's New Year's Eve event.

First Quarter Action Plan

Ms. Nicklas distributed the 2015 Strategic Plan for the DCP with notes of what actions will be completed during the first quarter of 2015 in order to stay on target for achieving the annual plan. First quarter focus will include: hiring a consultant for the funding strategy, establishing a Restaurant Task Force in order to determine how to best promote Downtown Columbia restaurants, planning for the annual race, developing a lakefront marketing plan, determining annual sponsorships, initiating the pathway maintenance plan, and initiating the beautification efforts for 2015.

Member Informational Updates

- **HHC** – Mr. Jenkins stated that he is working with Howard County on designing a plan for the maintenance of the multi-use pathway, which would be turned over to the DCP.
- **CA** – Mr. Matthews said The Haven on the Lake had a very successful Open House the past weekend.
- **Chamber of Commerce** – Mr. McClarty mentioned that the State of the County luncheon will be held on February 5th.
- **HCGH** - Ms. Karl mentioned that Howard County Hospital Foundation would like to partner with DCP regarding the next Symphony of Lights. Ms. Karl will contact Ms. Nicklas to schedule a meeting to discuss.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 10, 2015 at 1 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM.